

# The Christian's Daily Challenge

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Compiled by  
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## COMPENSATION

*The easy path in the lowland hath little of grand or new,  
But a toilsome ascent leads on to a wide and glorious view;  
Peopled and warm is the valley, lonely and chill the height,  
But the peak that is nearer the storm-cloud is nearer the stars of light.*

*Launch on the foaming stream that bears you along like a dart, –  
There is danger of rapid and rock, there is tension of muscle and heart;  
Glide on the easy current, monotonous, calm, and slow,  
You are spared the quiver and strain in the safe and quiet flow.*

*For rapture of love is linked with the pain or fear of loss,  
And the hand that takes the crown must ache with many a cross;  
Yet he who hath never a conflict hath never a victor's palm,  
And only the toilers know the sweetness of rest and calm.*

—Frances Ridley Havergal.

## January 1

### Keep challenging yourself!

*“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that ye, always having all sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work” (2 Cor. 9:8).  
“Stir up the gift of God, which is in thee” (2 Tim. 1:6).*

Since God is able to make all grace abound always in all things why should there be so many dwarfed, impotent Christians? The lack cannot be with the Source of Supply. It must, therefore, lie in the failure of Christians to draw from this abundance. Throughout the coming year let everyone challenge himself concerning these wonderful possibilities contained in the promises of God.

Keep challenging yourself! The moment that you become satisfied with yourself or with your work, that moment you begin to slip backwards. Challenge your thoughts, your actions, and everything that you achieve.

The development of this inner life of ours is the most important task that we have to achieve. Not the mere making of money. Not the attainment of fame or station, nor of that fleeting thing called acclaim. We must become content within ourselves. We must satisfy that hunger of the heart. By challenging the adverse forces that strive to push us from our line of purpose, we build a character!

Desire is the cornerstone of achievement. But, without will or purpose, even desire remains dormant. Keep challenging yourself! You can rout every pygmy of your nature if you will but decide to do so!

Thou broadenest out with every year,  
Each breadth of life to meet;  
I scarce can think Thou art the same,  
Thou art so much more sweet.

With gentle swiftness lead me on,  
Dear God, to see Thy face;  
And meanwhile in my narrow heart  
O make Thyself more space!

—*F. W. Faber.*

To be discontented with the divine discontent and to be ashamed with the noble shame, is the very germ and first upgrowth of all virtue.—*Charles Kingsley.*

January 2

## A year of prayer

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*“My soul, wait thou only upon God; for my expectation is from him”*

*(Psa. 62:5).*

*“Therefore I will look unto the Lord: I will wait for the God of my salvation”*

*(Micah 7:7).*

*“But it is good for me to draw near to God” (Psa. 73:28).*

Lord, at the threshold standing,  
I ask this gift from Thee,  
That all this year Thy grace is giving,  
A year of prayer may be.  
Give me a Golden Censer  
Burning with incense rare,  
And make my life a holy priesthood  
Of ceaseless praise and prayer.

Help me to pray for sinners,  
With travail pangs of love,  
Till souls are born and sins forgiven  
By power from above.  
Help me to take from Jesus  
My healing, breath by breath,  
And lift by prayer, the lives that languish  
In sickness, sin and death.

And from my glowing Censer  
Shall holy incense rise  
Before the golden altar yonder,  
The altar of the skies;  
And Jesus shall present it  
With His own incense rare,  
While the heavens are hushed in silence  
To hear a sinner's prayer.

Then back to earth, the Master  
The answering fire shall send,  
And earth and heaven begin to witness  
The Advent and the end.  
Lord, for that Consummation  
Our hearts and lives prepare,  
And that its coming we may hasten,  
Give us a Year of Prayer.

—A. B. Simpson.

It will never be altogether well with us till we convert the universe into a prayer-room, and continue in the Spirit as we go from place to place.—George Bowen.

January 3

## Faithfulness in small things

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*“He that is faithful in that which is least is faithful also in much”*

*(Luke 16:10).*

*“Who then is a faithful and wise servant, whom his lord hath made ruler over his household?” (Matt. 24:45).*

Do not wait for some great work to be dropped down in your lap. Do some little thing for God. If David had never tackled the bear and the lion he would not have been so successful with Goliath of Gath. Nothing is small that is done for God. You do not know what it may lead to.—*Reader Harris.*

No service in itself is small;  
None great, though earth it fill;  
But that is small that seeks its own,  
And great that seeks God’s will.

—*Unknown.*

I think that the folks who are faithful in that which is least will wear very radiant crowns. They are the people who are great in little tasks. They are scrupulous in the rutty roads of drudgery. They are the folks, who when they are trudging “through the Valley of Baca, make it a well.” They win the triumphs amid small irritations. They are as loyal when they are wearing aprons in the kitchen as if they wore purple and fine linen in the visible presence of the King. They finish the obscurest bit of work as though it were to be displayed before an assembled Heaven by Him Who is Lord of light and glory. Great souls are these who are faithful in that which is least!

Our Lord lived for thirty years amid the little happenings of the little town of Nazareth. Little villages spell out their stories in small events. And He, the young Priest of glory, was in the carpenter’s shop. He moved amid humdrum tasks, and petty cares, and village gossip, and trifling trade, and He was faithful in that which is least. He wore His crown on other than state occasions, it was never off His brow.—*J. H. Jowett.*

January 4

## **Make men see**

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*“Make all men see what is the fellowship” (Eph. 3:9).*

*“Lord, I pray thee, open his eyes that he may see. And the Lord opened the eyes of the young man and he saw” (2 Kings 6:17).*

Lorado Taft, the noted sculptor, related an incident of summer camp life on the banks of a lake where sunsets were exceptionally beautiful. One evening, a little nursemaid asked if she might run to her home nearby and “show the sunset” to her people.

“Certainly,” answered Mr. Taft; “but they will see it, won’t they?”

“No. I never saw the sunset until you came.”

It is a great privilege to make the beauty of the Christian life compellingly attractive to others.

As we meet and touch each day  
The many travelers on our way,  
Let every such brief contact be  
A glorious, helpful ministry.

—S. Coleridge.

Many a groping soul has seen the Gospel long before he has ever heard the grand old story with his ears. Such an one was the Chinaman who applied to a missionary for baptism. When asked where he had heard the Gospel, the reply was, “Nowhere, but I have seen it.” He then told of the remarkable transformation he had witnessed in a depraved opium smoker, noted for his violent temper. But he had met Christ, and the change wrought had broadcast the Gospel message more effectively than any sermon. “Oh,” said the candidate for baptism, “I have not heard the Gospel, but I have seen it.”

The story is told of Gordon Maxwell, missionary to India, that he went to a Hindu Pundit and asked him if he would teach him the language. The Hindu replied: “No, Sahib, I will not teach you my language. You would make me a Christian.”

Gordon Maxwell replied: “You misunderstand me. I am simply asking you to teach me your language.”

The Hindu replied again: “No, Sahib, I will not teach you. No man can live with you and not become a Christian.”

January 5

## What is your load?

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*“And hast borne, and hast patience” (Rev. 2:3).*

*“Bear ye one another’s burdens” (Gal. 6:2).*

Many things in common use these days have markings to indicate the load they can support. The great cranes on our quay sides display on their large boards: “Load 20 tons.” The bridges by which we cross rivers and railways are marked in the same way, forbidding vehicles of more than a certain weight to pass over them. Steamers have their plimsoll-line for the same purpose and can be loaded only to that limit. Even the very humble fuse from my electric amplifier—a thin, silvery strand of wire, so frail that it must be protected in a glass tube—proudly boasts its capabilities with “Load 1 ampere” marked on it.

Now that which counts in God’s higher order of things is known in the same way—by its load or burden. What do you carry? What is your load? “For the Kingdom of God is not in word but in power,” that is to say, not in empty profession and lip-service, but in power-carrying power—ability to get under the load and move something. We can all talk, but can we lift one another’s burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ?

Of the greatest of all burden-bearers, even the Lord Jesus Himself, it is said: “He bare our sins in his own body on the tree.” Amazing burden! “He beareth away the sin of the world” with agony and bloody sweat. Was there ever such a load? All the blasphemies and disobediences, the envyings, jealousies and strifes of men, and every sin imaginable to the fallen sons of Adam, borne right away, as far as the East is from the West, to be remembered against us no more for ever.

Now where do you come in all this? Are you carrying anything? What is your load? Can the Lord say of you as He did of the Church at Ephesus (Rev. 2:3), “Thou hast borne and hast patience”? How much can the Lord put upon you? What is your crumpling-up point? Will you squeal and grumble and grouse, or will you take it all and more besides, and still say like Paul, “this light affliction”?—*John Harrison.*

Now the two kinds of people on earth I mean  
Are the people who lift and the people who lean.  
Wherever you go, you will find the earth’s masses  
Are always divided in just these two classes.  
And, oddly enough, you will find, too, I ween,  
There is only one lifter to twenty who lean.  
In which class are you? Are you easing the load  
Of overtaxed lifters who toil down the road?  
Or are you a leaner and let others bear  
Your portion of labor, and problems, and care?

—*Ella Wheeler Wilcox.*

January 6

## **Make God's promises yours**

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*"Who through faith . . . obtained promises" (Heb. 11:33).*

*"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb" (Psa. 19:10).*

When I am asked for my favorite promises, I smile. It is not one text more than another, but a whole Bible blesses me, assures me, warns and corrects and comforts me. A hundred promises whisper to me. I never know when one of the promises—perhaps one that I have not met for days or even months—may suddenly stand before me, beckon me, speak to me tenderly, comfortingly, authoritatively, austerely; speak to me as though God were speaking to me face to face.

The ancient heroes of the Cross obtained promises by faith. You can buy a Bible for a few pence. And the Bible teems with promises. They are on almost every page. But you will not see them, your mind will not grasp them, your heart will receive no strength and consolation from them—if you have not faith. The man who goes through the Bible without faith is like the Boers and natives who walked over the diamond fields of Africa all unconscious of the immeasurable wealth beneath their feet.

When I reply that it is the whole Bible which blesses me, I do not mean that there is no one promise that looms large to me, but rather that there are so many which bless me and meet my daily needs that I am like a man with a home full of sweet children, every one of whom is so dear to him that he cannot tell which he loves most and which is most needful for his happiness.

My spiritual needs are manifold, and there seems to be a promise just suited to my every need, that matches my need as a Yale key matches a Yale lock, as a glove fits a hand, as light answers to my eye and music to my ear, as the flavor of delicious food matches my sense of taste, and as the attar of roses answers my sense of smell; as the love of one's beloved and the faithfulness of one's friend answer the hunger of the heart.—*Samuel Logan Brengle.*



January 7

## Fulfilling God's plan

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*"I am the Lord thy God which . . . leadeth thee by the way that thou shouldest go" (Isa. 48:17).*

*"I have raised him up in righteousness, and I will direct all his ways"  
(Isa. 45:13).*

Every human soul has a complete and perfect plan, cherished for it in the heart of God—a divine biography marked out which it enters into life to live.

No room for a discouraged or depressed feeling, therefore, is left you. Enough that you exist for a purpose high enough to give meaning to life, and to support a genuine inspiration. If your sphere is outwardly humble, if it even appears to be quite insignificant, God understands it better than you do, and it is a part of His wisdom to bring out great sentiments in humble conditions, great principles in works that are outwardly trivial, great characters under great adversities and heavy loads of incumbrance. The tallest saints of God will often be those who walk in the deepest obscurity and are even despised or quite overlooked by man. Let it be enough that God is in your history and that the plan of your biography is His, the issue He has set for it is the highest and the best.—*Horace Bushnell.*

God grant me these: the strength to do  
Some needed service here;  
The wisdom to be brave and true;  
The gift of vision clear,  
That in each task that comes to me  
Some purpose I may plainly see.

God teach me to believe that I  
Am stationed at a post,  
Although the humblest 'neath the sky,  
Where I am needed most;  
And that at last, if I do well,  
My humblest services will tell.

God grant me faith to stand on guard,  
Uncheered and oft alone,  
And see behind each duty hard  
My service to the Throne.  
Whate'er my task, be this my creed:  
I am on earth to fill a need.

—*Unknown.*

January 8

## Does the heavenly Guest abide?

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*"I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one"*

*(John 17:23).*

*"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?" (1 Cor. 6:19).*

If you had knocked at the door of my heart any time before my conversion, and had asked, who dwells in here, I would have answered that no one dwells here but Martin Luther! And if I had opened the door, and you had come in, you would have seen a raw-headed monk, with a shaven crown and a hair shirt, with two tables of stone under his pillow and a knotted scourge hanging beside his bed. But if you were to knock at the door of my heart tonight, I would answer that Martin Luther no longer lives here; Jesus Christ alone lives here!

—*Martin Luther.*

A friend of mine said recently, "I like the term, 'Holy Ghost,' for the word Ghost in the old Saxon was the same as the word for Guest." Whether that be so or not, it may certainly be said that the Holy Ghost is the Holy Guest. He has come into the world and visits every heart seeking admittance as a guest. He may come to the soul unbidden, but He will not come in unbidden. He may be refused admission and turned away. But He comes. He is in the world like Noah's dove, looking for an abiding place. He comes as a Guest, but as an abiding one, if received. He forces Himself upon no one. He waits for the open door and the invitation.

He comes gently. He comes in love. He comes on a mission of infinite goodwill, of mercy and peace and helpfulness and joy. He is the Advocate of the Father and of the Son to us men. He represents and executes the redemptive plans and purposes of the Triune God. As my old teacher, Daniel Steele, wrote, "He is the Executive of the Godhead."—*Samuel Logan Brengle.*

When Ignatius was on his trial at Rome, he was asked by the Emperor, "What is the meaning of your name, Theophorus?" (God-bearer). He promptly replied, "He who has Christ in his breast." And all Christians are God-bearers, whether they realize it or not. The unspeakably glorious mystery of an indwelling Holy Ghost is the possession of even the weakest and most failing child of God.

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Pearce, Samuel	May 9, Nov. 17
Pearse, Mark Guy	Jan. 13, May 2, July 3, Oct. 14, Dec. 21
Peterborough, Lord	Feb. 6
Phillips, J. B.	Dec. 14
Pickering, Arnold	Feb. 5
Pierson, Dr. A. T.	May 12, Nov. 19
Pigott, Jean Sophie	Jan. 30
Pike, J. G.	Apr. 20
Polycarp	May 30
Pope, Alexander	May 7
Pressensé, Dr.	Feb. 19
Punshon, W. Morley	July 7, Aug. 21, Oct. 19, Nov. 16, Nov. 30, Dec. 12, 22, 30
Purves, Jock	Nov. 30
Rawson, G.	Dec. 2
Reich, Max I.	June 11
Renty, Marquis De	July 20, Aug. 22
Reubens	May 19
Robertson, F. W.	Feb. 24, Sept. 30
Robertson, J.	Jan. 20, June 10
Rogers, Hester Ann	Aug. 2
Rollo, John	Feb. 5
Rossetti, Christina	Mar. 7, Oct. 6, Nov. 30
Ruskin, John	June 2, July 14
Rutherford, Samuel	Jan. 26, Oct. 15
Ryder, T.	Feb. 18
Sadler, Dr. William	May 8
Scott, Thomas	Dec. 1
Scroggie, Graham	May 13
Selden	Apr. 18

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Seneca	Aug. 9
Sherwood, Alice E.	Apr. 9
Simpson, A. B.	Jan. 2, 24, Mar. 17, May 9, 21, June 25, Sept. 17, Oct. 11
Simpson, Clara	Jan. 25, Nov. 11
Smiley, Maurice	Jan. 13
Smith, Hannah W.	Oct. 2
Smith, Mrs. M. R.	Apr. 22
Sparks, F. H.	Oct. 28
Spence, Rev. F. H.	May 31
Spurgeon, C. H.	Feb. 3, 4, Mar. 28, May 12, 16, 22, July 1, 6, Aug. 15, Sept. 8, 30, Nov. 4, 11, 19, 28
Stanger, Frank Bateman	Feb. 1
Steele, Daniel	Jan. 15, Apr. 2, May 28, June 11, Sept. 19, Oct. 10, Nov. 2, 24, Dec. 8, 16
Stennet, Samuel	Dec. 25
Sterling, Julia	Nov. 19
Stetson, Charlotte Perkins	Feb. 19
Stowe, Harriet B.	Mar. 16, Apr. 11, Nov. 3
Stowell, Hugh	Apr. 2
Studd, C. T.	Jan. 9, Mar. 23, Apr. 15, 27, Oct. 1
Studd, Mrs. C. T.	Dec. 26
Stumpf, J. H.	Jan. 29
Suffield, Mrs. F. W.	Dec. 26
Talmage, De Witt	Jan. 29, Apr. 26, May 19, June 20, June 27, July 25, Dec. 1, 19
Tauler, J.	Mar. 20
Taylor, James Hudson	Feb. 23, Mar. 2, May 16, 22, July 15, Aug. 4, 10, 13, Sept. 3, Nov. 27
Taylor, Mrs. Howard	Mar. 19
Taylor, I	June 18
Taylor, Jeremy	Apr. 20, Nov. 4
Taylor, W. M.	Dec. 30
Temple, Bishop, William	May 4, Dec. 5
Tennyson, Alfred Lord	Jan. 10
Tersteegen, Gerhardt	Oct. 10, 16, Nov. 14
Theresa, Saint	Feb. 16, May 7
Tholuck	Oct. 18
Thomson, Prosser	Apr. 19
Thoreau	July 7
Toplady, A.	May 25

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Torrey, R. A.	Feb. 1
Traherne, Thomas	Feb. 4
Trench, Richard Chenevix	May 31, June 12, Sept. 2, Nov. 15, Dec. 1, 15
Trotter, I. Lilius	Jan. 23, Apr. 1, June 3, 20, Aug. 31
Upham, Thomas	Feb. 28, May 13, Aug. 20, Nov. 1, 9, 13
Ussher, Howard T. N.	Mar. 31
Vaughan, Dean	Aug. 5, Sept. 25
Wagner, Charles	July 12
Walford, William	May 8
Warner, Anna	Dec. 6
Watkinson, W. L.	May 29
Watson, G. D.	Feb. 21, May 10
Watson, Jean H.	Jan. 16, May 15
Watson, Dr. John	Sept. 30
Watson, T.	Oct. 8
Wells, Amos R.	Feb. 2, Mar. 11
Wesley, Charles	Feb. 20, Mar. 3, Apr. 23, July 20, Nov. 15, Dec. 8, 11
Wesley, John	Mar. 17, 25, 29, Apr. 18, May 7, June 9, 24, July 13, Aug. 11, Aug. 25, Sept. 1, Oct. 2, 4, 24, 27, 30 Nov. 29, Dec. 14, 16, 23
Westcott, Canon	Apr. 25, Aug. 1
Whittier, J. G.	Feb. 13, Aug. 25, 29, Sept. 26, Oct. 3, 12, Nov. 16
Wilberforce, William	Jan. 20
Wilcox, Ella Wheeler	Jan. 5, Mar. 2, Apr. 25, May 25, Dec. 8
Wilkes, Paget	June 4, Nov. 20, 23
Winkworth/Dessler	Jan. 11
Wood, J. A.	June 26